



The President's Daily Brief

August 21, 1976

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exemption category 5B(1), (2), (3)
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

August 21, 1976

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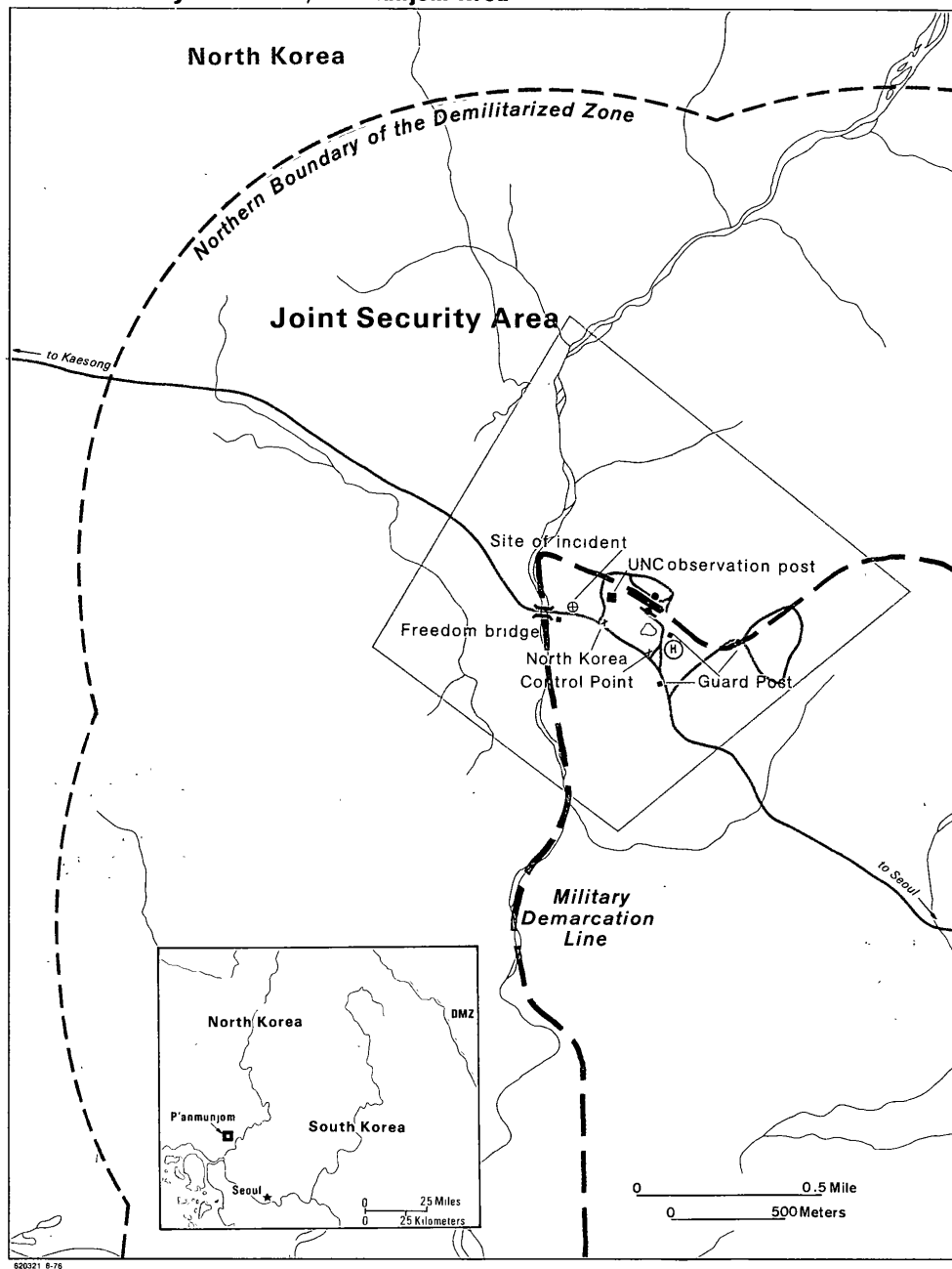
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Joint Security Area DMZ, Panmunjom Area



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KOREA: We present excerpts from the intelligence community's National Situation Report with information as of 2:00 a.m.

At 6:00 pm EDT August 20, a UN Command work party of 38 US and 60 South Korean personnel entered the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom to cut down the tree at the site where North Korean personnel had two days earlier killed two US officers. Some 20 North Korean soldiers were in the immediate area but did not interfere. Another 50 or so watched from across a nearby bridge.

The work party cut down the tree and removed two illegal North Korean barriers. The operation was completed, and the work party cleared the Joint Security Area in about one and one half hours. No US backup forces had to be committed.

Subsequently, the North Koreans requested a meeting of the two principal Military Armistice Commission members.

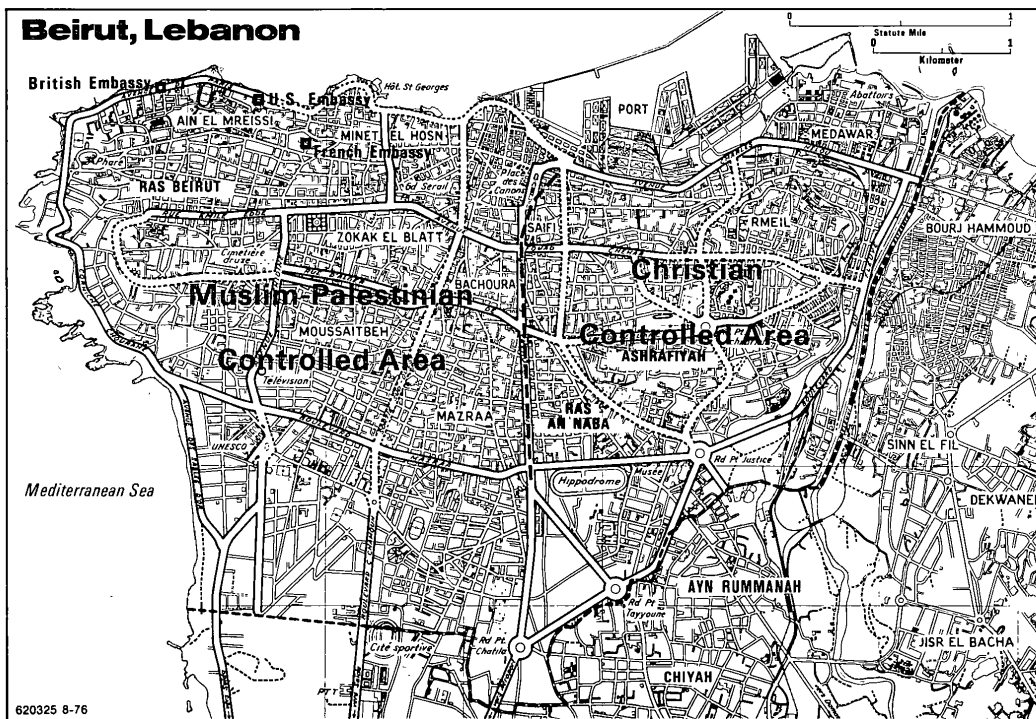
This meeting, which convened at 10:45 pm EDT, was the scene of a conciliatory North Korean statement to the effect that the August 18 incident was "regrettable." The North Korean spokesman promised that his side "will never provoke first."

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About two hours after the removal of the tree, a helicopter carrying the Task Force Commander was hit by small arms fire while airborne about 1,000 meters (1,100 yards) east of Panmunjom.

One round struck the tail rotor pylon; there were no casualties, and no fire was exchanged. We do not consider this significant or even necessarily related to the task force operation. Such incidents happen routinely when the

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North Koreans believe our aircraft approach too close to their positions.

Pyongyang's basic policy stance is committed to finding a way to rupture US - Republic of Korea security ties and will put much effort into portraying the US as the prime instigator of instability on the Korean Peninsula.

Pyongyang doubtless perceives that it will have a number of good opportunities toward this end in coming months, for example, during the US election campaign and the UN debate on Korea this fall. We would expect, therefore, that North Korea will continue to stage provocations from which it expects to extract political and diplomatic mileage.

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LEBANON: Heavy and indiscriminate shelling between east and west Beirut continued yesterday.

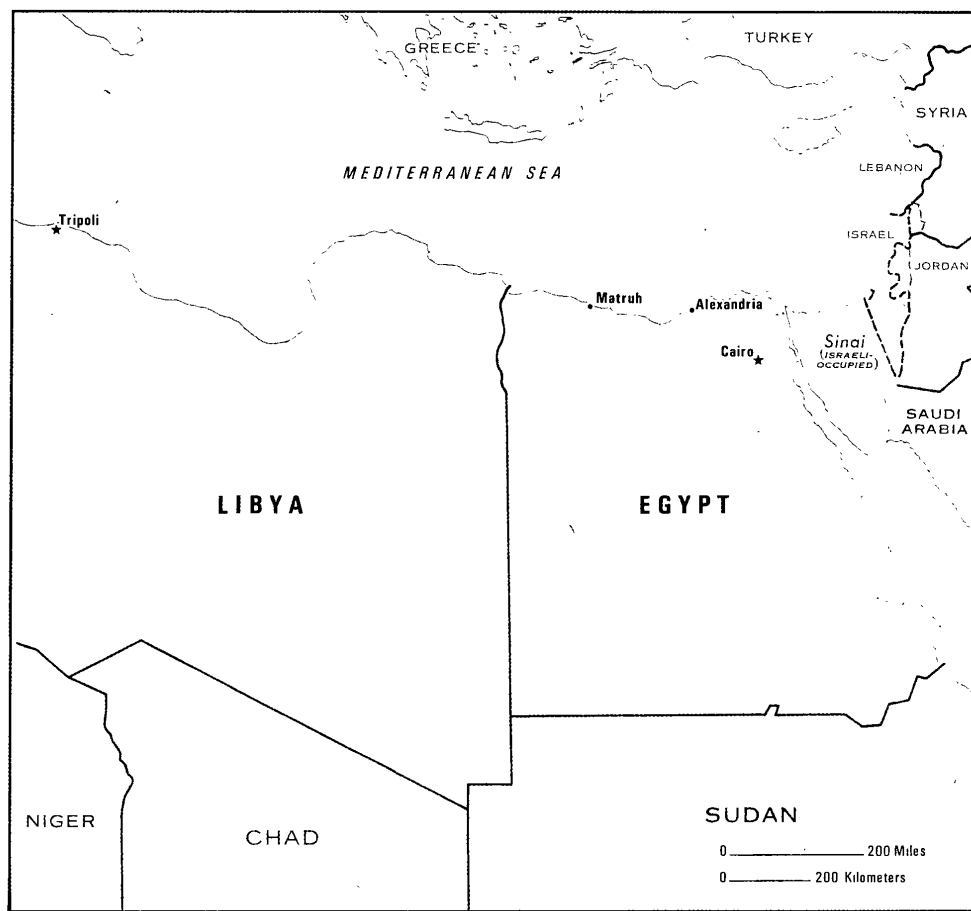
The heaviest exchanges occurred in the southern suburbs and in central Beirut where many foreign embassies are located.

The Christians' delay in launching their campaign in the mountains east of the capital probably results from a hitch in their coordination with the Syrians who were to provide artillery support for the offensive.

Syrian President Asad has been reluctant to undertake new military moves against the Palestinians. This reluctance presumably stems in part from his concern over increased domestic criticism of his Lebanese policy and the international attention recently focused on Tall Zatar.

Asad may also calculate that his next move should facilitate Syria's much touted goal of transferring

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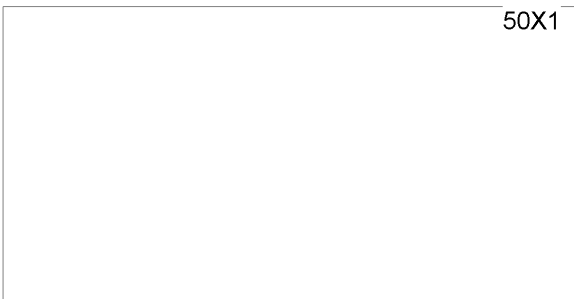
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power from President Franjiyah to Ilyas Sarkis. Damascus could be stalling the Christians until Franjiyah steps down, or it may want to avoid altogether any move that would upstage Franjiyah's departure and the momentum this would give to serious negotiations.

Asad has obtained approval from his senior military advisers, however, for a renewed military offensive in Lebanon should it be necessary to force a settlement.



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EGYPT-LIBYA: *The Egyptians are continuing their military preparations for a possible showdown with Libya.*

A new order declaring a 20-kilometer (12 mile) military zone along the Egyptian-Libyan border area is to take effect early next week. This may indicate that Cairo intends to complete its buildup by then in anticipation of an attack on Libya.

the Egyptians are preparing to deploy another squadron of fighter aircraft to Matruh in western Egypt. This would be the second fighter squadron to deploy to Matruh in about a month, and the third squadron to relocate there since late May.

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on Thursday two amphibious 50X1 ships arrived at Matruh from Alexandria. The ships can carry several hundred men and a few tanks. Their arrival could be related to the deployment, scheduled for this week, of Egypt's only marine infantry brigade to the area.

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A source of the US defense attache in Cairo has reported that the Egyptians will ultimately assign one mechanized and one armored division to the border area, with another armored division to be held in reserve in eastern Egypt.

These units might begin to move to the border this weekend. Civilian travel this weekend on the railroad between Cairo and Alexandria reportedly has been restricted by Egyptian authorities.

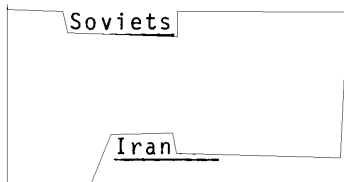
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NOTES



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The UN Security Council may reconvene early next week to consider a draft resolution on the Greek-Turkish dispute.

The draft is being formulated jointly by the US, the UK, France, and Italy.

Greek and Turkish leaders, while publicly continuing to trade charges about each other's provocations in the Aegean, privately seem to be looking for ways to back away from the present impasse.

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The SR-71 flight over Cuba [redacted] did not provide any additional information on the presence of SA-5 radar near Havana.

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Much of the island, including the Havana area, was cloud covered, and no SA-5 equipment was seen in the cloud free areas that were photographed. We have not yet detected any signals associated with the radar.

What appeared to be the SA-5 radar was seen in Cuba for the first time on satellite photography [redacted] at a Soviet signals intelligence collection facility southwest of Havana. The next satellite photography will be available in mid-September.

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Japan [redacted]

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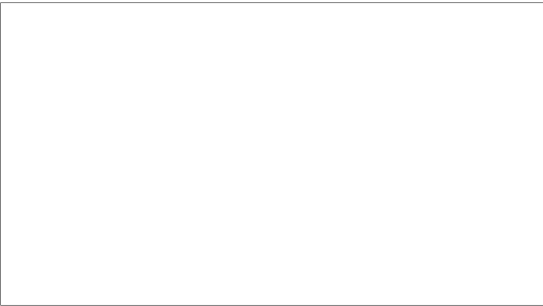
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Violence continued in South Africa yesterday in three black townships near Port Elizabeth.

The death toll for the past three days in that area now stands at 33, making the Port Elizabeth riots bloodier than those that erupted last week around Cape Town.

In reaction to the riots, a number of industrial groups in South Africa have forwarded proposals to the government to improve conditions for urban blacks who supply the bulk of the labor force. The most sweeping recommendations came from the Transvaal Chamber of Industries in Johannesburg, one of the most influential employer groups in the country.

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The proposals urge limited self government for black townships, improved housing and education, higher wages, and greater job mobility. The government has not responded to these suggestions although it has displayed some receptivity to another plan for upgrading urban black housing.

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Kenya has ordered or is negotiating for military equipment worth nearly \$240 million.

In addition to 12 F-5 fighter aircraft from the US, the Kenyans have ordered equipment from the UK valued at \$70 million; this includes tanks, surface-to-air and antitank missiles and artillery. Kenya has \$28 million of transport aircraft and support equipment on order from Canada, and is negotiating for Italian helicopters, West German trucks, and Australian small arms.

Kenya's efforts to upgrade its military capabilities were considerably spurred by last month's tensions with Uganda.

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